

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please substitute and enter the following **clean** version of each of the following rewritten replacement claims 1, 2, 7, 8, 14 and 15 for the respective pending claims of the same numbers. Versions of these rewritten claims, with bracketing and underlining to show the changes, appear at the end of the REMARKS section below.

Please rewrite claims 1, 2, 7, 8, 14 and 15 as follows:

1. (Twice amended) A conveyor for elongate components (12) designed with a head (41) and a shank (42), with a feed arrangement (7), for feeding the components in a prescribed direction, comprising a transfer arrangement (8) with a transfer region (15) into which the elongate components (12) are fed from a feed duct (11) comprising a head guiding duct (13) having a feed path for the heads (41), and a shank guiding duct (14) with the ducts (13) and (14) being in communication with a conveying duct (16) into which the components (12) can be moved from the transfer region (15), characterized by the transfer arrangement (8) which comprises:

at least one catch element (18) extending along, and adjacent, the head guiding duct (13) generally in the prescribed direction of the feeding of the elongate components (12);

at least one portion (21) of the at least one catch element (18) being removably extendable into and out of the feed path of the head guiding duct (13);

a biasing element (39) positioned to normally urge the at least one portion (21) of the at least one catch element (18) movably into the feed path of the head guiding duct (13) for engagement with the elongate components (12) being fed therethrough; and

the at least one catch element (18) and the at least one portion (21) thereof being mounted for deflected movement out of the feed path of the head guiding duct (13) against the normal urging of the biasing element (39) upon engagement with each of the elongate components (12) being fed through the feed path of the head guiding duct (13) to allow continued feeding of the elongate components (12) through the feed path.

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2. (twice amended) The conveyor according to claim 1, characterized in that the at least one catch element (18) has a locking face (22) facing in a direction opposite the prescribed direction and at least partially limiting the transfer region (15) to prevent any elongate component (12), which has passed into the transfer region (15), from slipping therefrom.

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7. (twice amended) The conveyor according to claim 1, characterized in that the at least one catch element (18) is movable pivotally around an axis (38) and the biasing element (39) acts on, and allows movement of, the at least one catch element from the feed path upon engagement with the elongate components (12) passing through the feed path.

8. (twice amended) The conveyor according to claim 7, characterized in that the biasing element (39) is a compression spring, the at least one catch element (18) is formed with the at least one portion (21), which is a first end, and a second end (48), and the axis (38) is located at an intermediate portion of the at least one catch element between the first end and the second end thereof, and the compression spring is arranged to engage the at least one catch element (18) between the axis (38) and the first end of the at least one catch element.

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14. (twice amended) The conveyor according to claims 1 or 9, characterized in that the conveying duct (16) is formed by a split sleeve (31) which comprises a first end portion (34) adjacent the transfer region (15) and a second end portion (35) remote from the transfer region (15) an at least one resilient element (36) is arranged on the second end portion (35), the cross section of the conveying duct (16) tapering conically substantially from the first end portion (34) to the second end portion (35) and being enlargeable against the action of the element (36).